

Message Text

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-----092840 040711Z /23

R 032342Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMCONSUL IZMIR
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, TU

SUBJECT: SITUATION OF PATRIARCHATE IN ISTANBUL

REF: (A) ISTANBUL 745, (B) ISTANBUL 706

1. RABBI SCHNEIER, A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF THE APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION, CALLED AT THE DEPARTMENT TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION OF THE GREEK PATRIARCHATE IN ISTANBUL, AND TO INQUIRE HOW BEST HIS ORGANIZATION COULD BE HELPFUL, BOTH TO GREEK MINORITIES IN TURKEY AND TO MOSLEM MINORITY IN GREECE.

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2. DRAWING ON INFORMATION FROM VARIOUS ISTANBUL CABLES DEPTOFFS TRIED TO GIVE THE RABBI A CLEARER PICTURE OF THE SITUATION AS REPORTED BY CONGEN ISTANBUL. HE WAS MOST GRATEFUL FOR THE BRIEFING AND EMPHASIZED THAT HIS ORGANIZATION WANTS TO KNOW ALL THE FACTS ON THIS QUESTION IT CAN OBTAIN.

3. RABBI SCHNEIER AND ANGIER BIDDLE DUKE HAVE SPOKEN WITH TURKISH UN REPRESENTATIVE TURKMEN AND HIS DEPUTY, ALTEMUR KILIC,WHO DENIED THE CHARGES REGARDING MISTREATMENT OF -HE GREEK MINORITY IN TURKEY. IN ADDITION, THEY PRESENTED A MEMORANDUM FOR THE FOUNDATION'S ATTENTION DESCRIBING THE MISTREATMENT OF THE TURKISH MINORITY IN THRACE. THE

TURKISH REPS IMPLIED TO RABBI SCHNEIER THAT HIS GROUP WOULD BE WELCOME TO OBJECTIVELY STUDY BOTH SITUATIONS.

4. A BOARD MEMBER OF THE FOUNDATION, EDGAR BRONFMAN OF SEAGRAMS, IS PLANNING A PERSONAL TRIP TO ISTANBUL AND WILL BE THERE AROUND APRIL 20, ARRIVING VIA TRAIN FROM ZURICH. THE FOUNDATION IS ALSO CONSIDERING SENDING A THREE OR FOUR-MAN TEAM TO TURKEY AT SOME TIME TO LOOK INTO THE TREATMENT OF GREEKS AND THE PATRIARCHATE IN ISTANBUL. IT HAS SENT SIMILAR TEAMS TO NORTHERN IRELAND AND EASTERN EUROPE. DEPTOFFS NOTED SOME OF THE DELICATE PROBLEMS SUCH A TEAM VISIT WOULD ENCOUNTER.

5. BOTH TURKMEN AND KILIC TOLD SCHNEIER THAT A FOREIGN MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVE (PERHAPS THE FOREIGN MINISTER HIMSELF) WOULD BE HAPPY TO BRIEF BRONFMAN IN ANKARA. WE SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS THE MOST APPROPRIATE PERSON WOULD BE THE GOVERNOR OF ISTANBUL SINCE BRONFMAN WOULD PREFER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOT TO MAKE TRIP TO ANKARA. WE TOLD RABBI SCHNEIER THAT CONSULATE GENERAL,IF DESIRED, WOULD BE PLEASED TO BRIEF AND ASSIST BRONFMAN.

6. FYI: THE APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION IS A SERIOUS, PRESTIGIOUS AND WELL CONNECTED ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PURSUIT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WHICH HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN HUMANITARIAN CAUSES IN A VERY POSITIVE FASHION IN A VARIETY OF WORLD TROUBLE SPOTS (E.G. EASTERN EUROPE). IT IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO THE DEPARTMENT. END FYI. CHRISTOPHER

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